

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



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## **DENVER DERMATOLOGISTS UNITE TO HELP THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES PLAY SAFE IN THE SUN AT THE CHERRY CREEK ARTS FESTIVAL**

***Mile-High City presents heightened, year-round risk of high-intensity UV exposure up to 25% more than at sea level***

(June 26, 2006--Denver, CO)—In a unified local effort to educate the public about the heightened, year-round risks of High Altitude UV exposure in the Mile-High City, a volunteer team of Board-certified Denver dermatologists from the Women's Dermatologic Society (WDS) will provide free skin cancer screenings, skin assessments, children's activities, educational materials and sunscreen giveaways at the Cherry Creek Arts Festival, July 1-3, 2006. The interactive educational exhibit, located at 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Clayton Street at the Festival, will provide free services and materials to the public from 10 am-8 pm on July 1-2, and 9 am-6 pm on July 3.

Women's Dermatologic Society~[www.womensderm.org](http://www.womensderm.org)

This dynamic family and youth-oriented community outreach, "***Families Play Safe in the Sun***", is made possible by a \$1,000,000 grant from the 3M Foundation. Denver is the sixth leg of a three-year, 15-city educational tour around the United States to promote family sun safety. Private practice Denver dermatologists and WDS members **Adrienne Stewart, MD and Kathleen Y. Sawada, MD** will co-host the local volunteer outreach effort at the Cherry Creek Arts Festival.

The "Families Play Safe in the Sun" campaign has a particularly important message for the Denver community, given the area's higher altitude. **Dr. Stewart** notes that UV radiation increases by 4% per 1000 feet elevation, causing UV exposure in the Mile High City to climb to 20-25% higher than sea-level areas. "Many people do not realize that the higher altitude increases the risks of dangerous UV exposure to this extent, on a year-round basis." **Dr. Sawada** adds, "A sunny winter day in Vail, CO can give as much harmful ultraviolet exposure as a sunny day in July in Miami, FL, especially since snow reflects 85% of UV radiation." Given these facts, the event's co-hosts agree that "vigilant sun protection as a way of life is critical for Denverites of all ages."

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Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper will declare Saturday, July 1, 2006 as "Families Play Safe in the Sun" Day to commemorate the local WDS volunteer campaign to raise awareness about skin cancer prevention and sun safety.

The "Families Play Safe in the Sun" campaign is offered to the public at a time when skin cancer ranks as the most common form of cancer in America, with one million new diagnoses expected in 2006.

- Skin cancer is the leading form of cancer among young women, ages 25-29, and the fastest growing cancer among 18-29 year olds.
- If caught in its earliest stages, melanoma, the most severe form of skin cancer, is highly treatable; if left undetected, it can be fatal.

Overexposure to the sun is the most *preventable* cause of skin cancer, thus people need to make the daily commitment to safeguard their health. The American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) recommends:

*(1) Regular visits to your dermatologist;*

*(2) Liberal application of a high SPF, broad-spectrum*

*UVA/UVB sunscreen to all exposed areas of the body and*

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*face, with re-application every two hours;*

*(3) Wearing sun-protective clothing, a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses;*

*(4) Sun avoidance during peak hours.*

According to **Suzanne Connolly, MD**, Associate Professor of Dermatology, Mayo Clinic, Scottsdale, who leads the national WDS community service effort, the mission of ***Families Play Safe in the Sun*** is to “educate, encourage, and empower people of all ages to make sun safety a way of life, and practice proper skin health habits on a daily basis.” The WDS effort draws from 1,200 WDS members nationally to provide volunteer support in local communities to reach out to diverse populations to heighten sun safety awareness and practices.

In addition to generous funding from the 3M Foundation, product donations will be provided by Coolibar; Del-Ray Dermatologicals; Dermatologic Cosmetic Laboratories; Ortho Neutrogena; Phoenix Brands; Procter & Gamble; Schering-Plough; Skyrad; and Starberry, Ltd. DermaScans will be furnished by Schering-Plough.

**WHO:** Volunteer dermatologist members of the Women’s Dermatologic Society from the Greater Denver area, led by Kathleen Y. Sawada, MD and Adrienne Stewart, MD.

**WHAT:** “Families Play Safe in the Sun” community service outreach providing free dermatologic assessments, children’s activities, sun safety educational materials and sunscreen—OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

**WHERE:** Entrance area of Cherry Creek Arts Festival at 3rd Ave. and Clayton Street.

**WHEN:** Saturday, July 1 and Sunday, July 2, 10 am-8 pm and Monday, July 3, 9 am-6 pm.

**INFORMATION:** 1-877-WDS-ROSE (937-7673). Visit:  
[www.womensderm.org](http://www.womensderm.org) or [www.playsafeinthesun.org](http://www.playsafeinthesun.org)

*The Women's Dermatologic Society supports the careers and professional development of women dermatologists. The mission of the Women's Dermatologic Society is to help women in dermatology achieve their greatest personal and professional potential by striving to: foster, promote, and support women's issues in dermatology; identify, train, and recognize women leaders in dermatology; and provide a forum for developing relationships.*